

March 18, 2019

The journalism and public relations faculty of USC Annenberg state the following:

- 1) We know firsthand how diligent and hard-working our students are. We want to acknowledge the pain and distress that this most recent gross lapse of governance and accountability at the university is causing. It is a personal affront to the effort and integrity that Annenberg students have given toward their studies.
- 2) Transparency, honesty and accountability are at the core of the journalism and public relations professions. For that reason, we believe we have a moral and intellectual obligation to speak out and demand that USC uphold these values.
- 3) We pledge to immediately launch a collaborative student-faculty reporting initiative. This initiative will seek to discover the full facts of the recent admissions cheating case, as well as previous scandals, of equal or greater gravity. It will explore the university's culture and governance failures, especially its lack of transparency and documented tendency to turn a blind eye. The initiative will operate independently of the university administration in all matters, and publish independent journalistic work that sheds light on these issues.
- 4) We also pledge to begin working on a series of joint public relations student-faculty projects that will address the university's abject failure to communicate honestly and regularly with its constituents.
- 5) We believe these two initiatives embody a positive affirmation of our values as a school and failure to act would constitute a failure of our professional duties.
- 6) In addition to the steps outlined above, we pledge to investigate the fundamental inequities of the university's admissions systems and lack of transparency.

This document was approved by a vote of journalism and public relations faculty present during a meeting on Monday, March 18, 2019.

